

CHAPTER 4

WRITING FOR MAGAZINES

The “Navy story” can take many forms. All must be considered, and each, depending on the nature of the material to be presented, should be used.

One of these forms is the magazine. Too often overlooked by Navy journalists, this medium offers a ready market for virtually any subject one might consider. Since magazines cater to the tastes, temperaments and interests of specific groups, they offer an excellent medium for you to reach exactly the audiences you desire.

These groups, with their special identified interests, provide a possible readership for many stories that have little or no appeal to the general public. An editor for the *Washington Post* would have extreme difficulty finding any news value in a story about a San Diego-based sailor from Cleveland who collects coins. The editor of the *Numismatic News*, on the other hand, would welcome such an article and is even prepared to pay for it. The point is that the “Navy story” has many facets. Some are of interest to virtually everyone, some to relatively few. Whatever the case, all the stories should be told using the medium most appropriate for a particular story. Just remember — almost every story idea, even one conceived with another medium in mind, is also right for some magazine.

This chapter acquaints you with the various types of magazines and magazine articles. It also introduces you to the composition and styles of magazine articles. Finally, it offers you some tips on researching magazines, researching story ideas and getting your articles published.

MAJOR CLASSES OF MAGAZINES

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the major classes of magazines.

In general, the four major classes of magazines are as follows:

- Consumer
- Trade, technical, professional and business
- Company (house organs)

- Service-oriented

CONSUMER MAGAZINES

Consumer magazines, the largest of the four classes, include all those publications found on the newsstand (fig. 4-1). Their contents attempt to appeal to the general public or to large groups in our society that share common interests. With few exceptions, consumer magazines carry advertising and are sold individually or by subscription. A few magazines that qualify as “consumers” are sold only by subscription.

Consumer magazines are made up of general interest publications and special interest publications. This distinction is made not so much for the readers as for the potential writers of magazine articles.

Magazines are purchased by people who expect certain things from a particular publication. For a magazine to be successful, those expectations must be met. Therefore, a writer must adapt to the style prescribed by a magazine’s editorial policy and submit only stories dealing with its expressed area of concern. Any disregard of this policy will result in a story’s automatic rejection, regardless of how interesting or well written it maybe.

General Interest Publications

General interest publications, as the category implies, are intended for the general public. Their subject matter is broad, and their appeal usually transcends most of the boundaries of age, sex, race, education, occupation and geography. Magazines such as *Reader’s Digest*, *Life*, *Parade* and *The Saturday Evening Post*, fall neatly into this category. Each contains a variety of articles to interest a diverse audience. Others, such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, also qualify as general interest publications. Although they concentrate primarily on news and current events, they still cover a wide range of subjects, offering something for everyone. Also, their material is presented in an easily read style that explains a news story in a way any reader can understand.

Some magazines originally published for specific groups now attract a wider audience because of



Figure 4-1.—Consumer magazines provide potential markets for magazine writers.

alterations to their contents or the changing interests of the reading public. *Family Circle*, for example, is not read exclusively by women, and men are not the only readers of *Gentlemen's Quarterly*.

Special Interest Publications

Special interest publications, as the term implies, are magazines directed at specific groups of readers with one or more common interests.

Some magazines attempt to cover all aspects of a broad subject, while others are concerned only with a particular element of the general subject. *Sports Illustrated*, for example, contains stories on practically any sport, but *Golf Digest* carries only stories related to golf.

Other special interest publications find their audiences through different demographic segmentations. There are magazines published primarily for men (*Field*

and *Stream*, *Playboy*, *Gentlemen's Quarterly*, etc.), women (*Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, *Woman's World*, etc.), boys (*Boys' Life*) or girls (*Teen*).

There are magazines for various age groups. For example, *Senior World* is published for senior citizens; *Modern Maturity* for men and women 54 or older; *Mademoiselle* for college women, ages 18-22; *Careers* for boys and girls, ages 15 to 18; *Children's Digest* for boys and girls, ages 8 to 10; *Jack and Jill* for children, ages 6 to 8; and *Highlights for Children*, ages 2 to 12.

There are also magazines aimed at blacks and other minorities. *Ebony*, for example, is intended for black men and women and could be considered a "general interest publication." *Essence* is one of a number of magazines published with black women in mind, and *Players* caters to black male readers.

Some magazines are published for residents of a specific location, such as *Phoenix* for citizens of

Phoenix, Arizona. Others, such as *Denver Living*, are for newcomers to an area. Still others, such as *Aloha*, *The Magazine of Hawaii*, are directed toward potential visitors to a particular city, state, or country.

There are magazines for the members of almost all religious sects (*Catholic Digest*, *Baptist Herald*, *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, *The National Jewish Monthly*, etc.) and most clubs, associations and fraternities.

In short, virtually every group has a corresponding consumer magazine published expressly for it.

TRADE, TECHNICAL, PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS

Magazines in the trade, technical, professional and business class are published for active business people. The readers of these publications are looking for ways to improve their businesses and increase profits. While they might appreciate a little humor in the articles and want the material to be well-written, they are not reading them for pleasure.

These business journals are designed to appeal to one of the following three specific groups:

- Retailers
- Manufacturers
- Professionals and industry experts

Retailers, along with business people who perform various services, are interested in such subjects as successful sales campaigns and unique merchandise displays. Manufacturers expect articles dealing with ways to solve industry problems, such as personnel absenteeism and equipment failure. Professionals and industry experts want stories about new techniques and technical developments in their respective fields.

All of these business people are interested in making money and managing their businesses more efficiently. Therefore, the primary purpose of each of the business journals is the goal of helping its readers do their jobs better. Besides stories about business trends and solutions to problems, these publications often offer advice on ways a particular business can be operated more profitably.

Trade Journals

While the term *trade journal* is often applied to all publications in the business journal class, there are subtle differences.

A trade refers to skilled work usually requiring extensive training, but not necessarily formal education, to master it. Carpentry is one example of a trade; printing is another. Therefore, a trade journal is a publication addressing the skilled laborers in a particular field, or the work they perform. *Motor Magazine* and *Ceramic Monthly* are examples of trade journals.

Technical Journals

Technical journals usually discuss sophisticated material, equipment or instruments and their use. Examples of technical journals are *Datamation*, *Broadcasting* and *Photomethods*.

Professional Journals

Professional journals are publications intended for professional people. This group primarily includes persons with a vocation or occupation requiring advanced education and training and involving intellectual skills. This group specifically comprises those working in such fields as law, medicine, theology, education, engineering, journalism, and so forth. However, the term *professional* has, in general use, been expanded. It now includes the executives, managers, department heads, some staff members and even the sales force of most business enterprises.

Business Journals

There are business journals for those persons in, seemingly, every occupation imaginable. There is *Cashflow* for accountants, *Advertising Age* for ad agency personnel, *Chilton's Food Engineering* for those in the food and beverage processing industry and *American Psychologist* for psychologists.

There is *Scholastic Coach* for high school and college sports personnel, *Instructor Magazine* for elementary school teachers, *American Bee Journal* for amateur and professional beekeepers and *Grocery Distribution* for operators of food warehouses and distribution centers. *Police* is published for law enforcement personnel and *Editor and Publisher* for newspaper personnel. There is the *ABA Journal* for lawyers, *Private Practice* for medical doctors in private practice and *C&S (Casket and Sunnyside)* for funeral directors. *Across the Board* caters to business people.

COMPANY PUBLICATIONS (HOUSE ORGANS)

Unlike business journals, company publications, or house organs, are produced by, or for, the businesses or organizations they serve. Their readers need or want certain information about the companies for which they work, and the companies try to provide it.

There are six basic kinds of house organs. Many of the larger companies publish them all. A number of companies consolidate their news into fewer publications. Some small companies produce only occasional newsletters for their employees. Whatever the case, all have a need to communicate to an internal or external audience. And all have a need for material that will interest their readers.

The six types of company publications are as follows:

- Employee
- Customer
- Stockholder or corporate
- Sales
- Dealer
- Technical service

Employee

Employee magazines are designed to inspire and motivate employees. They keep workers up to date on company programs and policy and knowledgeable about employee benefits. They also provide recognition of the accomplishments of employees and inform co-workers of those achievements.

Published at regular intervals (weekly, monthly, etc.), employee magazines are much like ship and station newspapers.

Customer

Customer magazines are produced to remind their readers of the desirability of using a company's product or service.

Stockholder or Corporate

Stockholder or corporate magazines are published to inform a company's shareholders about policy and financial matters concerning that company.

Sales

Sales magazines are publications designed to help a company's field representatives make more sales. These publications contain suggestions on generating customer interest in some product or service and tips on closing sales. They might carry an evaluation of a successful sales campaign and offer advice on ways for the sales force to use it in connection with their wares. Sales magazines also are useful in keeping a sales force abreast of changes and improvements in their products and for motivating personnel with articles on positive thinking.

Dealer

Dealer magazines are publications produced to maintain an open channel of communication between a manufacturer and each independent dealer. They deal largely with facts about the manufacturer's product.

Technical Service

Technical service magazines are publications that contain technical information necessary for using or repairing a manufacturer's product.

Many of the larger companies, and some of the smaller ones, have their own printing facilities and editorial personnel so they can produce their publications "in-house." Others employ only editorial personnel and "farm out" the printing requirements. Still other companies contract to have their magazines produced entirely by outside publishers. Regardless of the system used, the masthead of each magazine contains the name and address of the editor to contact about submitting material.

SERVICE-ORIENTED MAGAZINES

Service-oriented magazines are those magazines produced primarily for military personnel (active duty, reserve and retired), military dependents and Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees. That is not to say that these publications have no readers outside their targeted audience. Many of the service-oriented magazines are read with interest by such people as educators, contractors, former military personnel and "friends of the services," such as Navy League members.

However, Navy journalists writing for these magazines should remember to direct their articles to the primary audience. Service-oriented magazines may

be compared with the special interest publications in the consumer magazine class. They are directed at a specific group of readers with a common interest (concern about the military establishment). Some of these magazines are intended for readers in all the armed forces (*Defense News*), while others are directed at a single service (the Navy's *All Hands*). Still other service-oriented magazines are published for a select group within a broad specific group. Examples of this type of magazine include *The Navy Supply Corps Newsletter* and *Mech. These* publications could also be compared with trade journals in the company publications class.

Service-oriented magazines are generally divided into the following three categories:

- Internal
- Association-produced
- Commercial enterprise

While most government agencies and all of the military services produce publications for their people, here we are concerned only with those published for the Navy. Therefore, all references in this manual to internal magazines are only to those produced for an audience connected directly with the Navy. These internal magazines include publications produced by the DoD, Department of the Navy (DON) and individual naval commands. These publications can also include any magazine published by a command in another branch of service if at least one of the Navy's publics is apart of its targeted audience.

Internal

Internal magazines are financed with appropriated, or in some cases, nonappropriated funds. They are issued periodically — most are monthly publications — and contain no advertising. They are distributed free to their intended readers throughout the fleet. However, these publications are available to anyone in or out of the service and may be obtained at prescribed subscription rates. Internal magazines are edited (except for articles submitted by outside sources) and written by military personnel and civilian employees of the federal government.

Examples of internal magazines are *All Hands* (mentioned earlier), *Link*, a quarterly magazine dealing with enlisted personnel information, and *Navy Family Lifeline*, a newsletter of educational and informational articles and feature stories of special interest to spouses and families.

Association-Produced

Association-produced magazines are service-oriented periodicals sponsored primarily by associations interested in the military establishment and the individual services. In most instances, these publications are written and edited either by employees of the DoD or privately employed individuals. Most magazines in this category carry advertising to help with their financing.

Examples of association-produced magazines are *Proceedings*, sponsored by the U.S. Naval Institute, and *Sea Power*, sponsored by the Navy League of the United States.

Commercial Enterprise

Commercial enterprise magazines are those published by private enterprises. They are financed by advertisers who want to reach a military audience.

Examples of commercial enterprise magazines are *National Defense*, *Military Living*, *Off-Duty*, and the *Times Magazine*. Magazines in this category are also listed with the special interest publications group in the consumer magazines class.

Commercial enterprise and internal magazines provide the most probable markets for most Navy stories. However, all possible markets should be considered when you are developing a story idea

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Analyze the types of magazine articles and recognize the methods used in researching ideas for the various types.

Magazine articles are the stories, news items and other copy, regardless of length, that appear in magazines. Before publication, any such material is called a **manuscript**.

Magazine articles may be either fictitious or true, and much of the information presented in this chapter can be applied to both types. However, since Navy journalists are expected to deal with facts, only nonfiction writing is specifically addressed here and throughout this TRAMAN.

The major difference between a magazine article and a newspaper story is the style in which each is written. Matthew Arnold, a famous nineteenth century

English poet and literary critic, once described journalism as “literature in a hurry.”

Arnold was not trying to belittle newspaper writers with that remark. He was merely noting that the obvious difference between news reporters and other writers is the breakneck pace at which newspaper journalists so often must operate. Newspaper reporters, by the very nature of their jobs, must carry the burden of unrelenting and monotonous regularity intensified by the pressure of deadlines. Working under those conditions could hardly be considered ideal for creative writing.

Now, however, even newspapers have discovered the magazine style, and many are even adopting its format!

Most newspapers report hard news in the traditional, inverted pyramid style but have had to use new tactics to compete with television coverage of timely news events. Their solution has been to provide in-depth coverage and a lengthy analysis of the news.

Many newspapers also have begun carrying any number of feature stories in their pages on a regular basis to boost circulation. Some newspapers now publish almost nothing but features, especially photo features. And almost all major dailies with large Sunday editions publish their own magazine inserts or carry a syndicated magazine insert, such as *Parade*.

Consequently, when you are searching for a market for your manuscripts, you may often need to look no further than your local newspaper. Remember, however, that newspapers are published more frequently than magazines, and therefore, they usually are governed by stringent deadlines.

“Traditional” magazines, on the other hand, impose no such deadlines. It is true that news magazines, financial publications and a few other periodicals have a need for timely material. However, those are not the magazines you are likely to approach about running your Navy stories.

While all magazines, of necessity, have deadlines to meet, they are only printers’ deadlines. Most magazines carry material compiled two to three months in advance of publication.

Sometimes a magazine staff member is given a deadline for writing an article for a particular edition, but usually outside writers are faced with no such constraints. Any idea you may have is yours to develop at whatever pace you choose. You can allow ample time for research, time for the actual writing and more time, as necessary, for rewriting. You can leave the project and

go on to other things, returning when you are ready. Then, when you are satisfied with your article, you are the one who decides it is completed. ‘Theoretically, all this is done before anyone else knows the article is in the offing. In effect, it does not exist until you are ready to submit it.

Realistically, you, working as a Navy journalist, are likely to be given an expected completion date for a magazine article assigned by your PAO. Also, after communicating with a magazine editor about a proposed article, you may be told that the article is needed before a particular date. Those instances could be thought of as deadlines, but not very rigid ones. They mean glancing at a calendar, not watching a clock. This more leisurely pace of writing allows the marked difference in style between standard newspaper stories and magazine articles. Basic news stories, you will recall from Chapter 2, are written in an inverted pyramid style. This form is preferred by newspapers and electronic media news departments because it presents all of the important facts at the beginning of a story. If there is not enough time to write or enough space or time to publish the complete story, a paragraph or two will usually suffice.

Since magazine articles are printed in their entirety, there are no requirements to put all of the important details “up front.” Therefore, magazine writers may use any format they believe best suits the material being presented. This allows the writers wider latitudes of expression and creativity.

The magazine form also provides writers with the opportunity to be more thorough in their storytelling. Both news stories and magazine articles deal with facts. However, while newspapers usually present the basic details without comment (except in editorials and columns), magazines amplify those facts in depth to show how they will affect the reader. When necessary, magazines also permit their writers to provide extensive background details to enable the reader to understand the subject more fully.

A newspaper’s news has a perishable quality; its value and interest diminish as the degree of immediacy wanes. The news in magazines, although less timely, is more enduring. Many magazine articles are as informative and interesting a year after publication as they were on the day they first appeared in print. Magazine articles also are remembered longer than newspaper stories because magazines are read more thoroughly, and at a more leisurely pace, than are newspapers.

TYPES OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Any attempt to classify all of the forms of magazine articles would probably prove to be inadequate. However, certain characteristics do tend to identify seven general categories. These categories frequently overlap, and the dividing lines that separate them often become blurred. Even so, this classification serves as a starting point for learning to recognize the various types of magazine articles. This knowledge is necessary before you can even consider writing for the magazine industry. For our purposes, there are seven basic types of magazine articles. They are as follows:

- Personality sketch
- Personal experience
- Confession
- Narrative
- Utility
- Interview
- Featurette

Personality Sketch

The personality sketch is a short biography that includes an individual's achievements. The "purpose of an article of this type, whether a success article or a profile, is to portray the intimate details of character and personality of someone. The person may be widely known, one who has achieved some form of greatness or someone whose life is in some way interesting or remarkable. The individual does not have to be a famous show business or political personality; this type of story could just as well be written about a Navy person.

A Navy jet pilot who adopted an entire orphanage of Japanese children was the subject of an article of this kind. Another dealt with a sailor aboard a destroyer who spent his reenlistment bonus on football equipment so his shipmates could compete against the crew members of larger Navy ships. Still other sketches have been written about Navy scientists, combat heroes, chaplains, test pilots and athletes.

Personal Experience

Unusual adventures, unique accomplishments, rare travel experiences and countless other personal experiences lend themselves to treatment in this type of article.

"My 60 Days Under the Sea in an Atomic Submarine," "I Fly With the Blue Angels" and "I Walked on the Moon" are typical titles of personal experience articles.

Thousands of Navy men and women have had exciting personal experiences they might have developed into good magazine articles. Quite often, however, they do not have the ability, the time or the inclination to write these experiences on paper. Nevertheless, they usually will talk about their experiences which can provide a good story opportunity for a journalist in search of ideas.

When you write this type of article, use the "as told to..." byline. You should also use caution when writing in the first person. The frequent use of "I" can become, or appear, egotistical.

Confession

The confession article is not necessarily a "shocker" or scandal story. Instead, it is an "inside story" of conditions or problems normally unfamiliar to the average reader. The confession article often involves handicaps or disadvantages that are overcome by determination and common sense.

Incidents related in confession articles are often typical of everyday life. A spoiled, rich kid learns discipline and responsibility aboard a Navy destroyer. A midshipman's determination to overcome a speech defect saves his Navy career. A young man cures a morbid fear of water by joining the Navy. Subjects like these have been used in confession articles. The most noticeable characteristic of the confession story is the intimate, confidential tone in which the writer seems to be personally revealing a secret to the reader. Although the subject matter is personal, it must evoke an emphatic response from the reader.

Humor should not be overlooked in this type of article. An individual's willingness to tell the story shows that he or she is not ashamed. If humor can be injected into the account, it indicates an objective approach.

Some subjects are best when given a humorous treatment. Many interesting articles about common phobias, such as a visit to the dentist, have been written that way. This approach often helps readers to see that most of the fear is unfounded. If the humor is skillfully handled, the readers will probably be amused.

Keep in mind, though, that humor must fit the situation. Flippant treatment of serious or distressful subjects will likely alienate your readers.

Narrative

The narrative is especially suitable for writing about Navy subjects. Sharp characterization, vivid description, dialogue, action and suspense are skillfully woven into the framework of a narrative article to dramatize the facts. However, the facts must be adapted to this type of treatment. The writer does not invent them, exaggerate them or embellish them in any way. The story must be authentic even in the smallest detail.

The real life exploits and adventures of sailors the world over are told in magazine articles using the narrative approach. A heroic rescue, an epic battle, a dramatic struggle against the elements, a display of bravery and determination in the face of overwhelming difficulties are all subjects that maybe developed into narrative articles.

Careful research is important in writing the narrative article. This is especially true if it is about an event in which many of the magazine's readers may have participated. An important error or omission will immediately be noted by these people, and they will then be skeptical of the entire article. Also, the writing should be colorful and fast-paced. Otherwise it may sound like a chapter out of a history textbook.

Utility

Any process, product, method or idea that will help the reader become wiser, healthier, wealthier or happier is a subject for the utility article. Also called the "how-to-do-it" article, the utility article is generally shorter than most other articles and the writing is usually expository or explanatory.

The Navy offers a wealth of ideas for the utility article. At one time or another, practically everyone has devised a scheme to improve a job, working conditions or equipment. These ideas are especially valuable if they can be tailored for a specific magazine. There are thousands of trade and employee magazines constantly looking for material of this type. Editors of *Popular Science* and *Popular Mechanics* build their entire magazines around this type of article.

The utility article can be compared to a set of instructions presented in an interesting and lively manner. Writers should ask themselves the questions they feel readers are most likely to ask, then answer

them clearly and simply. Even though some readers may be experts, writers must assume that every reader is unfamiliar with the information and provide complete details. A routine set of instructions for building a simple cabinet can be interesting if it is presented properly.

You can use the first, second or third person in writing this article. The personal experience approach can be very effective in the utility article. The third person style should be used only if the idea presented involves dramatic or entertaining situations. The most common approach is to use the second person, imperative voice (You fit the wrench ...).

Interview

Interview articles present questions and answers that offer a subject's views on a given topic. Little background information is given in the article if the subject is widely known to the readers and the emphasis is on the topic of discussion. The interview requires much advance planning, however, and the writer should research the subject thoroughly before conducting the interview. Each edition of *Playboy* presents an excellent example of the interview article.

Featurette

The featurette is probably the most popular and best-selling short article found in magazines today. It is short and simple, and it contains the element of oddity or humor, and sometimes both. The purpose of the featurette is to entertain.

"Humor in Uniform" and "Life in These United States," regular sections in *Reader's Digest*, are good examples of the featurette. Nearly every magazine carries at least one anecdote as filler material in each issue.

RESEARCHING AN IDEA FOR A MAGAZINE ARTICLE

Every person, place, event or thing is a possible source for a magazine article. What one person sees daily and takes for granted, another person with a well-developed eye for the interesting and unusual often can turn it into a successful article. The idea sources and material concerning feature writing discussed in Chapter 3 also apply to magazine writing.

The Navy is a fertile source for subjects and ideas you can develop into good magazine articles. All you have to do is look around you. Better yet, thumb through

some of the current issues of the leading magazines. See what civilian professionals have written on the subject.

The sea, sailors and ships have fascinated readers for centuries. The modern saga of the sea and the men and women of the U.S. Navy is as thrilling as anything found in fiction. In many cases, the factual accounts of the modern Navy far surpass fiction material. Atomic-powered ships, supersonic aircraft, intercontinental ballistic missiles, earth satellites, probes into space and similar topics have stimulated the imagination of hundreds of writers. Yet, countless story ideas about those subjects are still available to you.

Opportunities in the magazine field for Navy journalists, or for that matter, any Navy man or woman with writing talent, are almost limitless. And to get started, one needs only to begin thinking.

Any magazine article, whether for a glamorous nationwide consumer magazine or for one of the Navy's internal publications, should begin with a good idea supported by a statement of purpose. An author without a purpose for an article easily loses sight of the intended goal. If an article would serve no purpose, the likely result would be wasted time and an unintelligible product.

Many beginning writers fail to narrow the subject to a workable idea. A sharp focus on a story idea is extremely important. The focus could be on an individual, an episode or theme, but it must be clearly defined.

The next step should take you, the writer, to the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. This guide is a cumulative index of published authors, subjects and titles that is current to within two weeks of its publication. When you use this reference, pay particular attention to the most recent coverage (by all publications) of your selected subject. This will help you determine if your idea is still fresh. Also, take notes to help you when you research information for the article.

You may also need to use some specific indexes for research. The *Air University Library Index to Military Periodicals*, for example, references all items that have appeared in service-oriented publications. Other special indexes, including the library card catalogue, the *Cumulative Book Index* and the *Book Review Index*, address subjects covered in a variety of other periodicals. You can also consult biographical dictionaries, encyclopedias, newspapers and pamphlets to learn about a particular subject. It is not uncommon for a writer to spend days, weeks or even months collecting information before an interview or visit.

One writer, preparing to write a personality sketch on a famous composer, spent six months doing research before he felt ready to interview his subject. During those six months, the writer spent three months reading about symphonies. He spent another two months studying that particular composer's works and a final month talking to people who knew the composer.

Obviously, you will not spend six months researching every magazine article you write. However, in most cases, you will need to do some extensive research. The in-depth nature of most magazine articles requires that the writer thoroughly understand the subject he or she is presenting. Unless you are writing from personal experience, you must be prepared to conduct whatever research is necessary to give your article the degree of authority it requires.

Studying Magazine Styles

Knowing the markets for magazine articles is almost as important as knowing your subject. The best-written manuscript serves no purpose tucked away in a file cabinet or desk drawer. And the best-conceived idea for an article is of no value unless it is presented in an acceptable manuscript.

Studying magazines can solve both of these problems. Your research will tell you which magazine publishers are interested in your subject and the style in which they want articles to be written.

As you examine the magazines, you should be alert to the literary style or approach a magazine takes in presenting a subject. For instance, several magazines might handle a piece dealing with the DMI, but each would present it in an entirely different way. The *Educational Review* would probably want to know the concepts and techniques of instruction, the *RCA Electronic Age* might be interested in the use of radio and television equipment, *All Hands* would likely prefer a story about the faculty and students, and *Parade* might want emphasis on the educational angle and benefits to the individual.

Several publications dealing with the needs and requirements of magazines are available to assist you in your research. One such book is *Writer's Market*, published annually by Writer's Digest Books of Cincinnati, Ohio. *Writer's Market* contains a listing of nearly all consumer magazines and business journals published in the United States and Canada. Along with those listings is the following information:

- Mailing address of publication.

- Names(s) of editor(s).
- Frequency of publication.
- Circulation
- Demography of readers.
- Approximate number of manuscripts purchased per issue (if any).
- Method of payment (flat rate for manuscript, pays per line of copy, pays per word, pays percent of magazine royalties, pays in magazine copies, pays nothing).
- Rights purchased (all rights; first North American serial rights; simultaneous, second serial (reprint) rights; one-time rights; etc.).
- Whether by-line is given.
- Description of material desired.
- Description of material not desired.
- Whether photos are desired, and if so, payment rates.
- Minimum and maximum lengths of manuscripts.
- Lead time for submission of season and holiday material.
- Whether unsolicited manuscripts are accepted.
- Whether previously published submissions are accepted.
- Whether simultaneous submissions are accepted. (Some magazines, especially regional ones, will consider such submissions if the offered manuscripts are not being sent to other publications in their state or geographical area.)
- Additional tips considered appropriate by various magazine editors.

You should keep in mind that most magazine editors have very specific ideas about material for their product. Any deviation from their expressed standards is almost certain to result in a manuscript's rejection.

The editors, especially those of the major, nationwide publications, can also be very selective in accepting material. Some will reject, out of hand, any offer of material from unpublished writers. However, the editors of many other publications encourage submissions by "new" writers. This is particularly true

of newly created, special interest magazines and many of the literary publications, or "little magazines," as they are sometimes called.

For Navy journalists this preliminary research is made much easier by the valuable assistance of the six regional Navy Offices of Information (NAVINFOs). NAVINFOs are field activities of CHINFO.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Manuscripts written as part of your official duties for civilian magazines *must* be marketed by a NAVINFO. You may send your manuscripts to Navy-produced magazines (such as *All Hands*) without NAVINFO involvement, but the aforementioned research rules apply.

Before sending your manuscript to a NAVINFO, you should call or write that activity, explain your story idea, then follow the guidance you receive. The NAVINFO will contact those publications most likely to use a particular story and notify you when and if a market is found.

If the idea has been accepted, you will be notified by the NAVINFO. They will then provide you information similar to that contained in the *Writer's Market*, mentioned earlier. Your NAVINFO will provide tips on the writing style preferred, advise you on when to submit your material and make suggestions for the length of your manuscript. The NAVINFO will also tell you if a commitment has been made by a magazine's editor to publish your story or if it is to be submitted on speculation.

The NAVINFO deals with the various magazines through correspondence called queries. In this context, a query is a letter from the writer, or in this case, the NAVINFO, to a magazine's editor. The query briefly describes a proposed article, and if required, contains up to three clips of the writer's previously published articles.

A favorable response to the query most likely will contain specific style tips — a list of do's and don'ts — on writing for that magazine. A large number of publications have their own styleguide booklets that are sent to potential writers. Early in your research of magazines or from the information provided by your NAVINFO, you gained a general insight into the style and editorial content of the magazine ultimately selected. Now you need to begin studying that magazine in earnest. If possible, get three or four different issues and read them thoroughly. Also, study the tips or styleguide supplied by the magazine's editor through your NAVINFO. Observe the character of the language. Note whether it is scholarly or adventurous, technical or

general, personal or formal, humorous or serious. You must also look for taboos on subject matter and content. Some magazines will not print slang, for example, and some will not mention their competitors.

When your research is completed, your story idea firmly fixed in your mind and your market clearly identified, you are ready to begin writing.

After having a few articles published by the same magazine, you will have developed a feel, or sense, for what that publication wants. Then you will be in a position to work leisurely on manuscripts whenever story ideas occur and you will be able to contact your NAVINFO about ready-to-publish material.

You should also give internal magazines, such as *All Hands*, the same intense study you give commercial publications. Navy internal magazines, like their civilian counterparts, have their own styles. Therefore, contributors, especially Navy journalists, should be aware of them and prepare their manuscripts accordingly.

While the editors of internal publications are more inclined to edit weak or unstylized copy than their civilian counterparts, you should refrain from making it necessary. You are expected to be a professional, and anything other than your best effort reflects poorly on you and your command.

As mentioned earlier, you are authorized to submit articles directly to Navy internal publications in the same manner your command makes routine news releases. You may also deal directly with those publications while you are developing a story idea. Although a formal query is unnecessary before submitting your manuscript, it never hurts to let the editors know what you are planning.

Outlining Magazine Articles

Whether you are a seasoned writer or a novice, all magazine articles should begin in the same way — with an outline. Experienced writers may use rough, written outlines or formulate them in their minds, but beginners are wise to continue using the formal, written method.

An outline is a valuable aid in magazine writing. It helps you organize and evaluate your information and it makes writing an article easier and faster. You should develop, thoroughly, the outline and include all the specific details, explanations and anecdotes that contribute directly to the article you are writing.

Once you prepare an outline, concentrate strictly on the actual writing of your article. You already will know

what facts to include and where and how to use them. The basic magazine article outline may be divided into the following five parts:

1. **Purpose.** State the reason or reasons for writing the article and what you intend to accomplish. This sets a course to follow once you begin writing.

2. **Market analysis.** Study surveys that show which magazines are read by the population segment you wish to reach with your article.

3. **Markets.** List the magazines identified in your market analysis that are most likely to publish the article you are planning to write. Follow this up with queries to those publications. (Note: Parts 2 and 3 are performed by a NAVINFO when dealing with civilian magazines.)

4. **Sources.** List the people, reference books, magazines, and so forth, from whom or from which you expect to get the information needed for your article.

5. **Plan of development.** List pertinent facts, major areas of coverage, subtitles, anecdotes, and so forth, in the order you want to present them.

WRITING A MAGAZINE ARTICLE

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the fundamentals of writing a magazine article and evaluate its components.

Except for style, most of the rules and information concerning the fundamentals of newswriting presented in Chapter 2 of this TRAMAN also apply to magazine writing. You must be able to recognize the 10 news element categories examined there. The presence and intensity of any of those elements, other than immediacy, determine the newsworthiness of magazine articles as well as news stories. Furthermore, you must apply the “ABCs of Journalism” discussed in Chapter 2 — accuracy, attribution, brevity (to some degree), clarity, inherence, emphasis, objectivity and unity. You should also understand and follow the guidelines provided under the heading “The Language of Newswriting.”

As the categories of magazine articles overlap, so do the methods of writing used in each. However, a common pattern can be found.

A major element of most articles, one that gives flesh and blood to the story, is the anecdote. An “anecdote” is defined as any specific, short, significant story or incident.

Generally, a magazine article can be divided into four basic components:

- The title
- The lead
- The body
- The conclusion

THE TITLE

The title of a magazine article should tell the readers the nature of the article. It usually features a short, terse statement designed to attract their attention or to arouse their curiosity. The title should entice the audience to read the article immediately.

A title, like the article itself, should be slanted or directed toward a particular market. Each magazine has its own title requirements for style, length and typographical arrangement. Some magazines prefer titles that summarize the information in the article. Others want descriptive titles. Still others prefer titles that make striking statements. And some favor titles featuring questions, quotations, direct appeal or alliteration.

In developing titles for their articles, writers must be honest. They should not mislead the reader with facts not supported by the articles, and they should avoid exaggeration or sensationalism.

The title should convey the tone and spirit of the material featured in the article. Declarative sentences with concrete nouns and active verbs are best.

If you have not thought of a good title when you begin writing an article, do not worry about it. Few writers title their stories in advance. Usually, the facts will suggest something suitable as you write. Often a strong sentence in your copy will provide the exact title you need.

THE LEAD

The lead of a magazine article is similar to the lead of a news story, except it is usually longer and nearly always more difficult to write. The lead may run only one paragraph in length, or it may run as much as 10 percent of the entire article.

Whatever space you allot to your lead, it must accomplish the following objectives:

- Indicate the central idea to be conveyed in the article.

- Contain a hint of the spirit and movement of the article.
- Locate the subject as to time and place.
- Show any relation that may exist between the facts and the reader.
- Generate enough interest to make the reader want to read the rest of the article.

Leads for magazine articles, like those for news stories, should be written in a manner suitable for the subject matter. The lead is the most important part of a magazine article. If it fails to sustain the readers' interest, they will not read the article. Therefore, many professional writers spend nearly as much time developing a good lead as in writing the remainder of an article. As trite as the expression may be, a good writer knows that "a story well begun is half done."

THE BODY

The title of a magazine article attracts an audience's attention. The lead arouses curiosity, stimulates interest and whets the readers' appetite for more facts. The body of the article must keep the readers interested.

Keeping your audience interested for two or three thousand words is a tough job. To do this, you must weigh every word, every sentence and every paragraph carefully. The facts you use must not only be interesting in themselves, but they must be presented in an interesting manner.

The body of a narrative or personal experience story is probably the easiest to write. All you have to do is relate the details in the order in which they happened. With this approach, you can depend on the action to hold the readers' interest. However, an article that contains no action and only presents straight, factual information is harder to write. Because the facts themselves are constant restrictions, you must use skill and imagination in presenting them. The facts must flow from the article naturally, without awkward pauses or sudden changes in direction.

In all magazine articles, paragraphs should be written so they interlock. The end of one paragraph should lead naturally into the beginning of the next. Transitions should be used in such a manner that the readers are not even aware of them. The key for you to make the body of the article interesting is in appropriately inserting anecdotes, specific examples and hypothetical situations. These devices help illustrate points and emphasize important facts.

THE CONCLUSION

A magazine article should end as dramatically as it began. When appropriate, use an anecdote that typifies the main points presented in the body. Surprise endings also work well. The conclusion should neatly and succinctly tie together all the threads of the article and bring it to a smooth finish. It should make the readers glad they read the article and leave them with the impression you wanted to make when you stated the article's purpose in your outline.

TIPS ON MAGAZINE WRITING

Along with studying the information presented here, you should read as many magazine articles as possible. Carefully observe how the material in the various types of articles is organized. Be aware of the different styles used in different kinds of magazines when they print similar stories.

Note, especially, the leads written by successful writers. Examine their sentence construction — the manner in which they “turn a phrase.” Then try writing a few leads and short stories of your own. To see which feel most comfortable to you, emulate some of the techniques of those published writers you have been studying. Experiment! Even with the vast number of magazines available to writers, the market is still highly competitive. The same factors that allow magazine writers to be creative also demand it. Therefore, the ability to write skillfully is essential to your success in this field. And that skill can be developed, through your willingness to learn and your desire to write.

MAGAZINE LAWS

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Determine the laws that apply to magazine writing.

While Navy journalists are not expected to be legal experts, there are a number of laws that merit your attention.

All writers should be aware of laws concerning defamation, fair comment, the right of privacy, copyright, fair use of the writings of others and plagiarism. This is especially true for magazine writers. The nature of their work makes the possible violation of those laws ever present, and for some, very tempting. Special care must always be taken to avoid these violations.

One area in which you must be particularly cautious is in writing articles containing personal commentary, where a strong possibility of defamation often exists. Another area of concern is in writing articles about people who do not want the attention. In articles of this type, you run the risk of invading someone's privacy. And finally, make sure your research is for information, not for someone else's phraseology. Creative writing means being original. Do not be guilty of copyright infringement or plagiarism. Also, remember that under U.S. copyright laws, **anything you write on government time cannot be copyrighted.** See Chapter 10 for further information.

Chapter 10 of this TRAMAN addresses the subjects of libel, the right of privacy and copyright laws. An understanding of that material will provide you with sufficient knowledge of those laws and will allow you to write without worrying unnecessarily about them. However, if any doubts or questions arise about those laws, do not hesitate to contact a legal officer for advice.

If you want to write for commercial publications and receive payment for your efforts, you must observe certain rules.

Your writing and research must be done on your own time (after normal working hours or while on leave). It must not interfere or conflict in anyway with regularly assigned duties and may not be done in connection with official duties.

Access to information sources, such as public affairs offices, is available to off-duty Navy personnel just as it is to civilian writers. However, you should remember that any use of DON facilities, equipment or personnel is permitted only in connection with official Navy assignments. Additionally, restrictions on access to classified material that apply to non-Navy professional writers apply equally to you if you are writing for a commercial publication on your own time.

Your off-duty magazine writing must not conflict with the public's receipt of prompt and complete information on government activities through the usual public information media. Further, both the subject matter and the methods of obtaining it must be legal and consistent with accepted standards of conduct.

In certain cases, the restrictions on writing for commercial publications — in connection with official duties — are waived for key DON officials. The term *key officials*, in this context, refers to flag rank officers, Navy civilian officials GS-16 or higher, and civilian or military personnel whose official assignments are of unusual prominence or authority. Those individuals may

be authorized to produce byline writings dealing with national defense plans, policies, programs or operations for specific categories of exclusive publications. Their writings may be printed in official DoD publications or magazines of other government agencies, of course. However, they may also be published, exclusively, in company publications (house organs) or commercially produced service journals, bona fide scientific and professional journals or encyclopedias.

Few businesses are more competitive than the consumer magazine industry. Therefore, a publisher's desire for and insistence on exclusive material are very understandable. The Navy's policy, however, is to avoid favoring one publication over its competitors. It is also Navy policy to make sure all information for the general public is made available through the normally accepted public information media. This policy virtually rules out hard news or "big" stories being written as exclusives by Navy personnel and explains the restrictions on writing for commercial publication

Still, there are official stories you can write for consumer magazines. You just need to be a little selective.

A newspaper account of a rescue at sea operation, for example, could be turned into an exciting magazine article. Even though all the basic facts had been published at the time, a stylized retelling of the event could produce some worthwhile reading.

An approach of this kind would not conflict with the general public's free access to the information. It is also reasonable for you to assume that such a story, no longer an exclusive, would still be of interest to a number of magazine editors. Numerous story possibilities similar to that one are almost always available if you are willing to look for them.

MAGAZINE REVIEW AND CLEARANCE

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Determine the methods of obtaining a review and clearance for magazine articles.

While Navy journalists, as well as other naval personnel, are allowed and encouraged to write for magazines, certain restrictions exist that must be considered. Permission for Navy men and women to write magazine articles is contained in *PA Regs*. Also contained in *PA Regs* are the restrictions in magazine writing and the exceptions to those restrictions.

The restrictions apply to the subject matter of proposed articles and to dealings with commercial publications. Unless proper clearance is obtained, no commitment will be made to furnish any nonofficial publisher with an official or personal manuscript that deals with military matters or has national or foreign implications. Subject matter of that nature includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Information of national interest
- Information originated at, or proposed for release at, the seat of government
- Information concerning foreign and military policy, atomic energy, guided missiles, new weapons or chemical, biological and radiological warfare
- Information concerning subjects of potential controversy between the military services
- Material concerning significant policy within the purview of other U.S. government agencies
- Information specially designated from time to time by the Chief of Naval Operations, or higher authority, as requiring clearance

Any material about which there is any doubt concerning its security value or propriety should also be submitted for review. Manuscripts requiring review and clearance must be forwarded to CHINFO. The material for review is to be typewritten, double-spaced on one side of each sheet of paper and submitted in quadruplicate. Manuscripts on subjects other than those just described may be offered to a publisher without prior clearance from higher authority. However, published copies of magazine articles should be sent to CHINFO for inclusion in DON files.